

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5 and 7-13 are present in this application. Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Claims 1, 2, 5, 11 and 12 are rejected over U.S. 5,672,978 (Kimura '978), claims 3-5 and 13 are rejected over Kimura '978 in view of U.S. 6,297,652 (Shimoda et al.) and claims 7-10 are rejected over Kimura '978 in view of Shimoda et al. and further in view of U.S. 2002/0060583 (Kimura '583).

The present invention is directed to an inspection apparatus for inspecting the electrical properties of a circuit board and a wiring board. In the inspection apparatus, the wiring board for connection in the adapter is deformed to be curved in such a manner that when the adapter is held under pressure by the respective pressing pins in the pressing pin mechanism and the respective electrodes to be inspected of the circuit board, portions being applied with the pressing force by the respective pressing pins and the respective electrodes to be inspected are shifted in the pressing directions. A non-limiting example of the curvature is shown in Fig. 7. Such an inspection apparatus is not disclosed or suggested by the prior art, as explained below.

As was described in the previous response, Kimura '978 discloses in Fig. 9 an inspection apparatus having inspection heads 68 and 68', off-grid adapters 63 and 63', pitch-converting boards 66 and 66', and anisotropically electroconductive sheets 67, 67', 71 and 71'. Boards 66 and 66' have respective electrodes 64 and 64', and heads 68 and 68' have respective inspection electrodes 69 and 69'. A printed circuit board 61 having electrodes 62 and 62' is to be inspected by the apparatus. See column 10, line 27 et seq. Pressing plate 77 presses unit 70 downward, and accepting plate 78 being a cushion is provided. See column 11, lines 5-14.

The Office Action on page 10 states that board 66 is capable of being curved, and further asserts that “capable” of being curved should be given no patentable weight. Claims 1, 3 and 11-13 recite that the board is deformed to be curved. In Kimura ‘978, there is no mention of board 66 being curved and board 66 is not shown to be deformed to be curved in the figures, particularly Fig. 9. Since Kimura ‘978 does not disclose the board of the pending claims, the pending claims are patentable over Kimura ‘978.

Shimoda et al. and Kimura ‘583 are cited for teachings related to terminal electrodes arranged in a way to be electrically connected to connecting electrodes for current supply and voltage measurement, and an anisotropic conductive elastomer sheet, respectively. However, no boards deformed to be curved are shown in the figures of Shimoda et al. or Kimura ‘583. Thus, even if such teachings could be combined with Kimura ‘978, the deficiencies noted above in Kimura ‘978 would not be cured.

It is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a favorable decision to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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